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Flanagan - Interior 2879

PRIBILOF FUR SEAL HARVEST TOTALS 97,091 ANIMALS

The effect of over-abundance appears to have resulted in the smaller number of seals which returned to the rookeries in the late 1950's; the effect of the current management practice in herd reduction is beginning to be evident in this year's return of a male harvest above the 65,000 level. An additional harvest of as many as 30,000 female seals will be necessary this fall as part of the management program.

The Pribilof herd, which had dwindled to 125,000 in 1911 when the first fur seal treaty made management of the Pribilof herd possible by the outlawing of high seas harvesting, had reached about 1,500,000 animals when the incidence of pup-killing diseases became a problem.

During the 40 years of herd build-up only the surplus males were taken.

The segregation of the young males, the most desirable group for sealskins, is largely accomplished by the polygamous nature of the seal. While seals are born in about equal numbers of male and female, the older bulls maintain harems of from 25 to 100 cows and drive the younger males away from the herd. Thus the males of the younger age groups are automatically segregated. The practice of harvesting the majority of these bachelor males each year permitted adequate numbers of the young males to acquire breeding age--about 7 years--and establish their harems.

The life span of the fur seal is about 20 years and the female begins to bear young at 4 to 6 years of age. The seals spend several months of each year at sea. In late May the old males return to the Pribilof rookeries. The younger males follow soon after. The females arrive early in June and the pups are born soon after the females arrive on the Islands. Each has a single pup in any one year. The average size of a newborn pup is 12 pounds. The nursery season for the new pup is also the mating season for the mother.

The five Pribilof Islands are in Bering Sea about 200 miles north of the Aleutian chain and about 300 miles west of the mainland. Of the two that are inhabited, the largest is St. Paul Island which is 14 miles in length. St. George Island, 40 miles away, is about 10 miles in length.

Records show that the Russians, who owned the Pribilofs until they came into possession of the United States in 1867 through the Alaska Purchase, had harvested about 2,000,000 seal pelts before 1834. Russia then placed restrictions upon the harvesting and from 1834 until 1867 only 600,000 pelts were taken. Under American ownership there was a 20-year period in which harvests of 100,000 a year were permitted and in most instances accomplished. This was followed by another 20-year period ending in 1910 when only about 330,000 sealskins were taken. Since 1911, the year in which the original fur seal treaty was signed by Japan, Russia, Great Britain (for Canada), and the United States, sealing has been prohibited on the high seas, and scientific management of the herd has provided for the dramatic increase in herd size and production of skins.

Intensive research is presently underway on the Pribilof Islands and at sea to learn more of the life history and population dynamics of the fur seal. These studies are coordinated through the North Pacific Fur Seal Commission, established under the provisions of the 1957 Interim Convention on Conservation of North Pacific Fur Seals, and are designed to provide information as to the maximum sustainable yield of fur seals, giving due regard to their relation to the productivity of other living marine resources of the area.

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FOUKE FUR COMPANY

1328 SOUTH KINGS HIGHWAY

ST. LOUIS 10, MO.

PUBLIC AUCTION DIVISION

We wish to announce that we will offer at public auction at 1328 South Kingshighway, St. Louis, Mo.

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5 AND 6, 1961

(Approximate Quantities)

FOR ACCOUNT OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT:

ALASKA FUR SEAL

11,300 Black
3,700 Kitovi*-processed
8,500 Matara*-processed
3,000 Lakoda* - Natural Sheared**

FOR ACCOUNT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN:

ALASKA FUR SEAL

2,000 Black
3,100 Matara*-processed

FOR ACCOUNT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA:

SOUTH AFRICA FUR SEAL

5,500 Transveldt*-processed - Neutral

FOR ACCOUNT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF URUGUAY:

URUGUAY FUR SEAL

1,000 Black
1,750 Neutral

FOR ACCOUNT OF OTHER SHIPPERS:

SOUTH AFRICA FUR SEAL

9,300 Transveldt*-processed - Neutral
2,500 Transveldt*-processed - Deep Blue Tone

All fur seal unless otherwise stated are dressed, dyed, machined and finished.

Goods will be on show on and after Thursday, September 28 at our show rooms, 1328 South Kingshighway. Sale will begin at 1:00 P.M. Thursday, October 5 and will continue at 8:00 A.M. Friday, October 6, 1961.

THE ENTIRE TRADE IS INVITED TO ATTEND THIS SALE

*Reg. U. S., Canada
and other countries

**Patent 3001591

FOUKE FUR COMPANY

ST. LOUIS, MO., U.S.A.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1961

Handwritten notes:
Matara \$81.29
Black \$1.72
Kitovi \$4.56
Grand Average - \$86.49
(Sheared) Lakoda - \$41.05

Daily Report on Items of Interest to
Assistant Secretary of Fish and Wildlife
From Bureau of Commercial Fisheries

Date: **October 9, 1961**

Name: **John I. Hodges**

Office: **Branch of Resource Management**

File: **4543**

Origin:

Fur Seal Auction at St. Louis, Missouri, October 5-6, 1961

Topic:

The following quantities of skins were sold to the account of the U.S. Government:

**23,500 regularly processed skins
3,000 Lakoda (natural, sheared skins)**

Disposition:

Prices received for this sale as compared with the previous two sales are given in the table below. Of special significance is the price received for the Lakoda skins, since it appeared that the future of this product was poor indeed following the April 21-22, 1961 sale.

The Lakoda process is used on the female skins which do not lend themselves to the regular dressing and dyeing process used on the male skins. The future of the Lakoda skin looks quite promising now as a means for utilization of female skins.

	<u>Oct. 1960</u>	<u>April 1961</u>	<u>Oct. 1961</u>	<u>Percent Change, last 2 sales</u>
Matsa	103.22	83.57	81.29	-2.6
Black	106.83	93.33	91.73	-2.0
Kitovi	101.50	87.20	84.56	-11.1
Lakoda	36.05	11.99	41.05	/242.4